



(12)

EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION

(88) Date of publication A3:
30.07.2003 Bulletin 2003/31

(51) Int Cl.7: **F01L 9/04**

(43) Date of publication A2:
11.12.2002 Bulletin 2002/50

(21) Application number: 02012618.1

(22) Date of filing: 06.06.2002

(84) Designated Contracting States:
AT BE CH CY DE DK ES FI FR GB GR IE IT LI LU
MC NL PT SE TR
Designated Extension States:
AL LT LV MK RO SI

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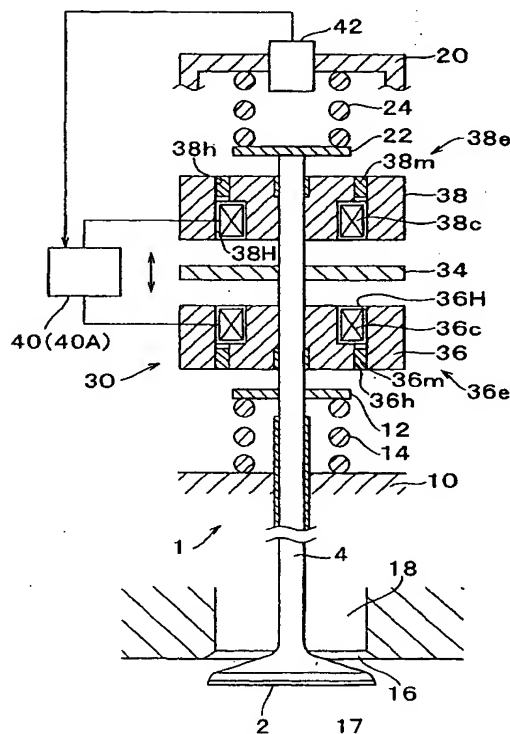
(30) Priority: 08.06.2001 JP 2001173328

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(54) **Apparatus and method for detecting change of neutral position of valve of electromagnetic valve actuation system, and apparatus and method for controlling the valve**

(57) A valve (1) is urged in the valve-opening direction by an upper spring (24) and in the valve-closing direction by a lower spring (14). The valve (1) is thus urged to a neutral position where the respective urging forces are balanced. The valve (1) is controlled to be released from one of two terminal positions, that is, the full-open position or the full-closed position, and to be attracted to the position from which the valve (1) has been released. The displacement pattern of the valve during this period is sensed by a displacement amount sensor (42), whereby the maximum displacement amount of the valve (1) from that terminal position is measured. The change of the neutral position is detected based on the change of the measured maximum displacement amount with respect to a reference value.

FIG. 1





European Patent
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EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT

Application Number
EP 02 01 2618

DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT			
Category	Citation of document with indication, where appropriate, of relevant passages	Relevant to claim	CLASSIFICATION OF THE APPLICATION (Int.C1.7)
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A	US 5 775 278 A (SUGAI TAKASHI ET AL) 7 July 1998 (1998-07-07)		
			TECHNICAL FIELDS SEARCHED (Int.C1.7)
			F01L
The present search report has been drawn up for all claims			
Place of search THE HAGUE		Date of completion of the search 10 June 2003	Examiner Klinger, T
CATEGORY OF CITED DOCUMENTS		T : theory or principle underlying the invention E : earlier patent document, but published on, or after the filing date D : document cited in the application L : document cited for other reasons & : member of the same patent family, corresponding document	
X : particularly relevant if taken alone Y : particularly relevant if combined with another document of the same category A : technological background O : non-written disclosure P : intermediate document			

EPO FORM 1503 03.82 (P04C01)

**ANNEX TO THE EUROPEAN SEARCH REPORT
ON EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION NO.**

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